



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Communications

REPORT OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE.

(Presented at the Biennial Meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, at St. Paul, June, 1906, by Kate Cassatt MacKnight, Chairman Civic Committee.)

Probably no committee, reporting to you to-day, has found it so difficult to collect, and select, the information rightly belonging to it, as has the Civic Committee. Why? Because the term civics is such an elastic one, and is generally used by the clubs all over the country to indicate any altruistic work performed by the club as a whole. To me it has seemed all the more interesting and marvellous to realize how civic work—as undertaken by our clubs—interlaces, and joins hands, with that of the Forestry Committee, the Child Labor, the Pure Food, the Library Extension, and in fact with all the wonderful committees appointed by our wonderful President.

But nevertheless, the absence of lines of demarcation has rendered it surprisingly difficult for me to know just what to include or exclude. The first problem presented to the minds of your committee was, how it would be possible to suggest the best lines of work, and manner of procedure, to clubs all over our broad land, where local conditions would be totally dissimilar; and, on that account, suggestions from outsiders—unfamiliar with such conditions—might prove most injudicious.

For this reason, and because of the impossibility of giving expert advice to hundreds of widely separated clubs, it was decided to prepare a handbook, giving concise, simple and practical suggestions, on a host of subjects, all suitable to be taken up by town and village improvement societies—as well as by committees for civic work, appointed by literary, and other clubs. This little book, then, "A Civic Primer," was the result, and is virtually the report of our committee. I commend it to your notice, and I hope all the club members present will obtain one of these little volumes before leaving St. Paul. A copy of it has been sent to every club belonging to the General Federation, and to the president of each State Federation. Over one thousand copies remain to be sold at the nominal price of ten cents each. We really feel that this simple little book will prove most helpful and suggestive to many clubs—even those organized entirely for study and self-development, and calling themselves "purely literary clubs."

The literary and self-culture club is, as a rule, the beginning and support of all those important elements, which foster the growth and influence

of our Federation; and which develop the interests of women in the forward movement of humanity. For, after spending months studying the idealism of Tennyson, or the scathing arraignment of all that is sordid, found in Browning, or after reading a course of Carlyle, and becoming imbued with his scorn of the pettiness of the pretentious world; then, at last coming to John Ruskin, with his appeal for more simple and spiritual living, for more beautiful surroundings, and less destruction of all that is fine and noble in ourselves, and in our surroundings; after all this, and other strong and wholesome mental pabulum, one naturally begins to open one's eyes, to look about, and to inquire if we have any right to continue to live amid hideous surroundings; or to permit the children of our "land of the free" to be destroyed by drudgery, or vicious environment; or to stand idly by while the grandest, most beautiful, and picturesque scenery in our country is destroyed by the blind greed of grasping commercialism!

Every literary club, which adds to its program some little discussion of the great civic questions of the day, will soon be repaid for what is done along altruistic lines, by the broader interest, the deepening of character, and the growing and genuine respect in which the club will be held by the community in which it is placed. It is most encouraging to note, from the reports sent to me by many of the states, what wonderful things have been done, and are being accomplished through the influence of club women in every section of the country. And yet many of the clubs, in some of our most progressive states, still report doing nothing in the line of civic work. Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts are well in the lead, with a long list of improvements not only undertaken, but accomplished. Probably the most interesting report of all that I received, came from California, and was written by the courageous Chairman of the Civic Committee among the ruins of what was a few weeks ago, the magnificent city of San Francisco. In it she reports that fifty-seven of the California clubs do civic work of some kind, spreading their energetic work along a multitude of different lines—such as caring for all roads and cemeteries, beautifying school grounds, planting trees and destroying pests, *organizing fire departments*, erecting fountains, etc.

They have also co-operated in the work of the Juvenile Court, have had women physicians appointed for state hospitals for the insane and feeble minded, and have united in urging forward a number of other important reforms.

In my report at the council meeting held last June in Atlantic City, I suggested that the civic work undertaken by the clubs be carried on along lines falling under the following classifications:

Municipal sanitation.

Municipal cleanliness—both material and moral.

The City Beautiful.

In the reports I have received, I observe that the City Beautiful appeals to the largest number of clubs, a large majority having reported the planting of trees, improvement of unsightly waste tracks of ground, the acquisition of parks, having railroad stations made more attractive and the

surrounding grounds turned into gardens, improvement of school grounds, the distribution of flower seeds and of plants to school children, and rewarding by prizes those who are most successful with plant or garden.

I would urge on all clubs, interested in the City Beautiful, to study the "Plan of Grouping Public Buildings," as already adopted by Cleveland, Washington, St. Louis and other cities, and to interest themselves actively, whenever any new public building is to be erected in their midst, to have the "Group Plan" adopted by the local authorities.

Much has been gained, also, along the lines of sanitation and municipal cleanliness, through the influence of our club women. A number of clubs report having garbage collected regularly. In Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and California, great interest is shown in the study and prevention of the ravages of tuberculosis, and in the establishment of camps and sanitariums, where those afflicted with the white plague can be properly cared for, their sufferings relieved, and where they are frequently restored to health. Streets have been kept clean, and, in some cases watered; anti-expectoration laws passed and enforced; hospitals opened and sustained; the smoke nuisance abated, etc.

In Texas, an active campaign was waged last summer against the stegomyia mosquito, with his preference for yellow fever germs—many of the club women assailing his haunts personally, with ample offerings of mosquito-killing kerosene. In Ottumwa, Iowa, and in Lisbon, North Dakota, regular "cleaning-up days" have been established; a very good idea for small towns or villages, where, we are assured from the latter place, "everybody works—even father."

I must not weary you with too long an enumeration of deeds accomplished but must take one moment longer to draw your attention to the heading of "Moral Municipal Cleanliness," which might better, perhaps, be called "Public Welfare." All the work for delivering children from vicious surroundings may be classed under this head, and I am happy to say, a large number of the clubs realize its importance. Probably few of the forms of modern philanthropy appeal to us more than the Juvenile Court, and the oversight of naughty children (many of them more sinned against than sinning) by probation officers, selected for their efficiency. The club women in many of our states are co-operating heartily in this work. Clubs for street boys and girls, and sewing schools for the latter have been opened and are conducted by our club women; crusades have been conducted against pool rooms, against cigarettes, to close saloons on Sunday and keep them far away from the neighborhood, objectionable posters have been banished, indecent advertisements put a stop to, slot machines for gambling closed up; and in Kentucky, prize fights were prevented, both in Louisville and Harrodsburg. In several places the authorities have been prevailed upon to establish matrons in the police stations, to treat gently the unfortunate creatures who drift thither.

I have not yet mentioned three of the most important matters which claim a large amount of attention in several of our states, and these are, "free kindergartens, summer play-grounds and vacation schools and chil-

dren's leagues of good citizenship." Our club women help to establish and conduct all of these, and it would be impossible to estimate the good thus accomplished, in the development of character, and the training of the future citizen.

After all, nothing will repay us so much as the protection, care and training of our children, who are to take upon their shoulders the government of our country, after we have passed hence, and this part of the work of a civic committee I especially commend to your careful and prayerful consideration. Try to shield the children morally by preventing coarse, vulgar and impure things being brought to their notice—either through the eyes or the ears. It is not only the children of our own immediate families who require to be so protected, but those of our poorer neighbor, in the neglected back street or alley. They, also, must be kept pure and trained aright, or they may some time become centers for evil in the community.

This brief review of altruistic work, done by club women throughout this country, has been perforce a hasty one; but, surely the record is surprising. Let us "thank God and take courage," for He has brought many wonderful things to pass through our instrumentality; and yet, so far, we are but on the threshold of the great things we are to accomplish. "Let us, then, not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

REPORT OF PURE FOOD COMMITTEE.

(Presented at the Biennial Meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs at St. Paul, June, 1906, by Mrs. Walter McNab Miller, Chairman, Columbia, Mo.)

The Pure Food Committee in making its first bow in public feels, on the one hand, a natural hesitation in speaking of what has been accomplished; but, on the other hand, its very youth makes it want to tell every single thing that it has done. Called into existence less than two years ago to help in the fight for a Federal law to protect the consumer in one State from food improperly labeled or adulterated and shipped into it from another State, it has far outgrown this its chrysalis stage, and is using its new found wings to touch at all points where pure food issues are at stake. It has turned its attention not only to legislative details, but to milk and water supply, meat and market inspection, system of uniform labeling, food standards, and has been fairly appalled at the work it has found crying to be done.

To ascertain conditions in various States and to secure co-operation from the clubs and State officials, this committee has written some 2,000 letters, sent circulars to every State in the Union, and tried by personal letters, talks, exhibits, and distribution of literature, to arouse interest in the cause. It has petitioned and memorialized the President, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Senate and the House, has kept up an incessant news-